

Message Text

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TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: MAY 1 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX, SOFIA FOR AMBASSADOR

1. MURREY MARDER OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT SECRETARY VANCE, APPEARING SUNDAY ON CBS NETWORK'S "FACE THE NATION," SHED NO NEW LIGHT ON HIS DISCUSSIONS IN MOSCOW
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WITH SOVIET LEADER BREZHNEV ON SALT, ON AFRICA, ON ANY OTHER ISSUE DISCUSSED IN KREMLIN. "HE INSISTED THAT CONFIDENTIALITY MUST BE MAINTAINED TO PRESERVE NEGOTIATING PROSPECTS," MARDER REPORTED. "VANCE DENIED REPORTS THAT HE WAS IRRITATED OR OPPOSED TO TIMING OF PROJECTED TRIP TO CHINA MAY 20-23 BY PRESIDENTIAL NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI." VANCE SAID, "I RECOMMEND TRIP, I

APPROVE IT, I THINK TIMING FITS VERY WELL AND I WHOLE-HEARTEDLY ENDORSE IT." MARDER ALSO REPORTED THAT VANCE SAID PRESIDENT'S DECLARATION STILL STANDS--HE WILL WITHDRAW MIDEAST PLANE "PACKAGE" IF CONGRESS ACCEPTS ONLY PART OF IT, MEANING ISRAELI PORTION. MARDER SAID PUBLIC OPINION POLL BY LOUIS HARRIS FOR PUBLICATION MONDAY INDICATED THAT AMERICANS ARE OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSED TO SALE OF MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO ISRAEL, EGYPT OR SAUDI ARABIA, INDIVIDUALLY OR IN PACKAGE. MARDER SAID WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL POINTEDLY NOTED THAT POLL WAS UNACCOMPANIED BY ANY COMPARISON OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES ON ARMS SALES IN PAST TO THESE NATIONS OR OTHERS.

2. KAREN ELLIOT HOUSE AND ALBERT HUNT OF WALL STREET JOURNAL SAID "SOME LAST MINUTE VERBAL MANEUVERING BY PRESIDENT CARTER ON HIS PROPOSED MIDEAST ARMS SALE DOESN'T CHANGE ITS SUBSTANCE BUT DOES MAKE IT MORE ACCEPTABLE TO CONGRESS. IN SUBMITTING SALE PROPOSALS TO CONGRESS FRIDAY, PRESIDENT AGREED TO DROP HIS PUBLIC INSISTENCE THAT THEY BE CONSIDERED AS PACKAGE." CHANGE IN SEMANTICS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO SATISFY SOME LAWMAKERS "WHO WERE AFFRONTED BY PRESIDENT'S INSISTENCE ON ALL OR NOTHING," JOURNAL CORRESPONDENTS SAID. "BOTH ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES BELIEVE SYMBOLIC GESTURE OF DROPPING WORD 'PACKAGE' SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCES CHANCES THAT CONGRESS WILL LET SALES GO THROUGH."

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3. FORMER STATE DEPARTMENT COUNSELOR HELMUT SONNENFELDT SAID SALT AGREEMENT "WILL HAVE TO BE JUDGED NOT SIMPLY IN TERMS OF WEAPONS IT PERMITS, LIMITS OR PROHIBITS, AND WHETHER THESE MEASURES REPRESENT GREATER BURDEN ON U.S. OR SOVIET UNION. CAREFUL ASSESSMENT MUST ASK, AND ANSWER, WHETHER AT VARIOUS POINTS DURING LIFE OF AGREEMENT, AND AT ITS TERMINAL POINT, U.S. STRATEGIC FORCES WILL BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH WHAT RUSSIANS WILL BE ABLE TO DO WITHIN TREATY'S TERMS....STRATEGIC ARMS AGREEMENT CANNOT BE TREATED AS AN ISOLATED EVENT. ITS TERMS MUST, OF COURSE, BE JUDGED ON THEIR SPECIFIC MERITS, BUT BEYOND THAT IT MUST BE SEEN IN CONTEXT OF TOTAL U.S. DEFENSE POSTURE OVER NEXT SEVERAL YEARS AND AS AN ELEMENT IN WORLDWIDE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION MARKED BY SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND ACTIONS THAT ARE MORE VENTURESOME THAN AT ANY TIME IN PAST. IF NEGOTIATION OF SALT TWO IS COMPLETED, RATIFICATION PROCESS WILL ENTAIL, AND INDEED OUGHT TO, MOST SERIOUS EXAMINATION OF OUR SECURITY SITUATION IN GENERATION." SONNENFELDT'S VIEWS WERE CONTAINED IN ARTICLE PUBLISHED SUNDAY BY NEW YORK TIMES.

4. NEW YORK TIMES, IN EDITORIAL SUNDAY, SAID UPCOMING "ROYAL DEBATE" ON SALT TWO "WOULD BE MORE WHOLESOME DEBATE IF WE TOOK TIME TO REDISCOVER UNDERLYING AMERICAN CONSENSUS ABOUT RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION. WISE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOW PROMOTE SUCH DISCUSSION TO FIND BASIS FOR EVALUATING SALT AND ALSO SOME COHERENCE FOR ITS ASSORTED DIPLOMATIC VENTURES. WE MAKE THIS SUGGESTION ON PREMISE THAT CONSENSUS EXISTS, SUPPORTING BOTH VIGOROUS DEFENSE AGAINST SOVIET UNION AND PRUDENT COLLABORATION WITH IT. BUT THAT CONSENSUS IS NOT WELL ARTICULATED BY OUR LEADERS;

INDEED, THEY OFTEN RISK UNDERMINING IT BY THEIR TACTICAL PREOCCUPATIONS. PRESIDENT CARTER'S MAIN SPEECHES ABOUT SOVIET UNION HAVE BEEN BANAL AND FUNCTIONAL, SENDING UNCLASSIFIED

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VEILED SIGNALS TO RUSSIANS ABOUT HIS HUMAN RIGHTS EXERCISES OR THEIR AFRICAN EXPEDITIONS....WE THINK RUSSIANS ARE SEEN BY AMERICANS AS DISTURBING FORCE, PARTICULARLY WORRISOME AS AMERICAN POWER AND INFLUENCE HAVE, RELATIVELY, DIMINISHED. BUT THEY ARE ALSO SEEN AS RATIONAL, RESPONSIVE TO CALCULATIONS OF COSTS AND BENEFITS. SIMULTANEOUSLY STRONG AND VULNERABLE, THEY CAN BE--AND SHOULD BE--BOTH FEARED AND BARGAINED WITH. ALL SOVIET-AMERICAN ARMS AGREEMENTS HAVE ONLY CHanneled WEAPONS RACE OUT OF SOME TECHNOLOGIES AND INTO OTHERS. THEY HAVE THUS BEEN marginally USEFUL IN PREVENTING EVEN MORE FRENZIED WEAPONS PRODUCTION ON BOTH SIDES. AND THEY HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY HELPFUL BY ALLOWING RIVAL STRATEGISTS TO CONFER TO DEMYSTIFY CALCULATIONS OF NUCLEAR TERROR. EVOLVING AGREEMENT APPEARS TO CONFORM TO THAT MODEST PATTERN. IT NEEDS TO BE EXAMINED, OF COURSE, BUT THAT IS BEST DONE AGAINST BACKGROUND OF OUR OVERALL RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION. BACKGROUND, AT THIS POINT, BELONGS IN FOREGROUND."

5. WALTER PINCUS OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS ASKED CONGRESS TO APPROVE FUNDS TO DEVELOP NEW BOMB, CALLED "RRR" BOMB FOR "REDUCED RESIDUAL RADIATION," WHOSE EFFECTS ARE OPPOSITE OF NEUTRON WEAPONS--INCREASED BLAST AND REDUCED RADIATION. NEW BOMB WOULD BE USED TO DEMOLISH STRUCTURES, DIG CRATERS OR DESTROY MOUNTAIN PASSES, TASKS ONCE ASSIGNED TO ATOMIC DEMOLITION MINES IN NUCLEAR STOCKPILE, PINCUS SAID. "THIS IS ORIGINAL IDEA OF 'CLEAN BOMB,'" GOVERNMENT EXPERT TOLD PINCUS. "IT IS BLAST WEAPON DESIGNED TO CREATE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF FALLOUT AND SUPPRESS IRRADIATION OF SOIL."

6. CONGRESSMAN TED WEISS SAID "NEUTRON BOMBS BLUR CRUCIAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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WOULD LEAD US CLOSER TO GLOBAL ATOMIC WAR." WEISS SAID
CARTER "ACTED COURAGEOUSLY AND WISELY IN DECIDING NOT TO
PROCEED WITH NEUTRON BOMB AT THIS TIME." SENATOR SAM NUNN
SAID CARTER'S ACTION "HALTS CONTINUED PURSUIT OF PROMISING
TECHNOLOGY DESIGNED TO DEFER SOVIET UNION AND ITS EAST
EUROPEAN ALLIES FROM EVER EMPLOYING THEIR MASSIVE SUPERI-
ORITY IN TANKS AND ARMORED FIGHTING VEHICLES AGAINST
WESTERN EUROPE." NUNN SAID CARTER'S DECISION "IS MISTAKE."
COMMENTS BY WEISS AND NUNN WERE PUBLISHED MONDAY BY
CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. CHRISTOPHER

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